

COSBOA

Small Business Energy Summit



Dealing with energy costs and extremes of weather

20 March 2019, Melbourne

Time & Date: 10.00am to 4.30pm 20 March 2019, Melbourne
Venue: Room 201, "CQ Melbourne," 113 Queen Street, Melbourne
INVITE ONLY

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Rationale	<p>Electricity prices have increased in recent years and are creating significant financial challenges for Australian households and businesses alike.</p> <p>COSBOA believes that this issue has emerged due to the repeated failure of successive Australian Governments (and their State/Territory counterparts) over the past 20 years to agree a pathway for the future delivery of affordable and reliable energy; achieved in a manner that supports the Australian Community’s desire for prudent reduction of our national GHG emissions.</p> <p>In the meantime, State/Territory governments have advanced strategies outside an agreed national framework. Some have sold energy generation and transmission assets (without due consideration of possible impacts on market competition) while others continue to own and operate State-based assets.</p> <p>In the wake of the Australian Government’s decision to abandon the National Energy Guarantee framework, other strategies are being pursued including a proposal to utilise an asset divestment mechanism to ‘encourage/ energy companies to make all reasonable efforts to reduce annual electricity prices for Australian electricity consumers.</p> <p>While COSBOA supports this policy in the absence of any other reasonable mechanism for incentivising price reductions, it is a <i>last resort mechanism</i> that – if ultimately exercised under any extension of the provisions of Australian Competition law – would mean everyone loses (i.e. energy companies, their customers and the wider Australian community).</p> <p>So what else can be done. How can business (small, medium and large) work cooperatively with energy companies to take control of their energy costs and implement strategies that reduce their increasing exposure to rising energy costs.</p> <p>Essentially, this is a change management task and requires a co-operative approach by all stakeholders (Government, energy companies and consumers) to develop a way forward – one that recognises the risks and successfully navigates these risks to deliver reliable and affordable electricity in an environmentally responsible manner.</p> <p>This Summit will focus on the possible policy settings, desirable business practices and co-operative supplier-consumer actions that might be pursued to reduce the growing impact of rising electricity costs on the Australian business sector.</p> <p>The summit will also focus on managing risks. Any change creates risks for the business community. The increase in black outs and brown outs combined with a spate of extreme weather events have created the need to improve risk management as well as to review insurance needs and general preparedness.</p>
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Purpose and aims	<p>To bring together government, regulators, small business organisations, the energy sector, and other key stakeholders to confront the energy dilemma. We will officially launch the COSBOA report ‘Future proofing SME from energy bill shock’ to focus the meeting.</p> <p>The key aims and outcomes will be:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">To hear from the government, the opposition, and cross bench on their policies that impact on small business and energy.To discuss practical solutions to help small business reduce their energy consumption and energy bills.To examine opportunities for co-operative actions that could be pursued by energy companies working with their business customers to both (a) manage the adverse consequences of business bill shock, and (b) explore opportunities to take control of their electricity bills and reduce their exposure to future price increases.To explore issues around risk management for extreme weather events including heat waves, floods, drought and fire.To hear from business people who have experienced extreme weather events.To hear from the insurance industry on the changing nature of risks.
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Agenda

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Opening and scene setting

If we are going to manage change and risk what do our policy makers have to offer?

Formal opening & Presentation by the Minister for Energy, The Hon. Angus Taylor MP.

Presentation by COSBOA - Peter Strong, CEO

Presentation - The Australian Labor Party

Presentation – The Findings of the COSBOA research, Fleur Anderson & Chris Black

Presentation - The Australian Greens

11.30am

Change Management – The Strategic Context

The case for action is clear – and has been for nearly two decades – but the pathway for that change is complex, political and economically risky. Can we develop a co-operative approach that navigates this complexity to deliver short term relief and build foundations for sustained change?

Mark McKenzie, Chairman COSBOA

Rosemary Sinclair, CEO Energy Consumers Australia

Sarah McNamara, CEO Australian Energy Council

Panel discussion – Q & A

Agenda - continued

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12.30pm

Cost Management for Small Business

John O'Brien - Partner in Deloitte's Financial Advisory Group providing

The small business perspective on affordability. How do we manage bill shock? Can we work together to manage costs?

Panel of business people who have managed cost escalation including a representative from AGL.

1.30pm - Lunch – provided

2.30pm

Risk Management for Small Business

Interruptability and small business risk

Insurance industry representative on the changing nature of risk.

Panel Presentation – Risk management in extreme weather, before, during and after weather events; energy usage and management.

A panel of small business people and key stakeholders

3.30pm

Roadmap for energy change

- Mark McKenzie, Chairman, COSBOA – COSBOA Communique
- Craig Latham, Deputy Australian Small Business Ombudsman, ASBFEO

Ends

Mark McKenzie, Chairman COSBOA and CEO of ACAPMA

Mark is a senior professional with more than 30 years business and public affairs experience. Prior to joining ACAPMA in February 2015, Mark held a variety of senior roles in the Australian corporate, small business and not-for-profit sectors.

These roles range from leadership of large operations within the NRMA Group of Companies (including the NSW Road Service Operation), founding and leadership of a national transport & energy consultancy between 2005 and 2012 (Rare Consulting Pty Ltd), and leadership of the commercial arm of the Victorian Automobile Chamber of Commerce between 2013 and early 2015.

In addition to his role at ACAPMA, Mark is a non-executive Director of VRT Innovations and the national Chair of two Australian Standards Committees (Electric Vehicles and Smart Grids).

Rosemary Sinclair AM

Rosemary Sinclair is the CEO of Energy Consumers Australia, a company established by the Council of Australian Governments Energy Council of Ministers in 2015 to strengthen independent consumer advocacy on national energy market matters of strategic importance and material consequence for energy consumers, in particular household and small business consumers.

Energy Consumers Australia focuses on the long-term interests of consumers of energy with respect to the price, quality, safety, reliability and security of supply of energy services.

Rosemary is a Director of CPA Australia and a recent past Member (part-time) of the Australian Communications and Media Authority.

Rosemary has many years of senior large-scale operations, communications and strategy experience in business and government across telecommunications, media and education.

Rosemary has held a number of Directorships on unlisted company and not-for-profit Boards, both Australia and international.

Rosemary received the Order of Australia Award in the 2018 Queen's birthday Honours List.

Rosemary has degrees in Arts, Law and Business and a Masters of Commerce from UNSW. Rosemary is a qualified CPA and Fellow of the Australian Institute of Company Directors.

Sarah McNamara

Sarah McNamara was appointed as Chief Executive of the Australian Energy Council in July 2018.

Sarah joined the Energy Council as General Manager of Corporate Affairs in January 2016. She is an industry leader with more than a decade of experience working with policy and regulatory frameworks across the resources and energy sectors.

Prior to the Energy Council, Sarah was Chief of Staff to the then Minister for Industry, the Hon Ian Macfarlane, and has also worked as a senior policy adviser to the Prime Minister.

Between 2008 and 2013 Sarah worked in AGL's Corporate Affairs team as Head of Government Affairs and Community Engagement. Sarah began her career as a corporate lawyer, and has a Bachelor of Arts/Law from the University of Melbourne.

John O'Brien - Partner in Deloitte's Financial Advisory Group providing

As a Partner in the Financial Advisory group at Deloitte Australia, John uses his 20+ years' experience in the Australian energy sector to advise Government, private sector operators, large energy consumers and investor clients on clean energy and clean technology strategies and projects. This work has included creating industry development strategies and programs for governments, innovation sourcing for industrials, sourcing/transaction management for international investors and strategy/export growth for technology companies.
